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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 000523

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2016  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [KPKO](#) [IV](#)  
SUBJECT: PILOT ID PROGRAM GETS OFF TO A GLACIAL START IN  
ABIDJAN

REF: A. ABIDJAN 515

[1](#)B. ABIDJAN 500

[1](#)C. ABIDJAN 495

Classified By: Poloff Phaedra Gwyn for reasons 1.4 b&d

[1](#)1. (C) The pilot identification program got off to an inauspicious start with only one petitioner appearing in the Port Bouet district of Abidjan on the morning of May 18, the first day of the program. About thirty Young Patriots showed up around 9:00, along with sanctioned Young Patriot leader Eugene Djue. Over one hundred well-armed Ivoirian Armed Forces (FANCI) and UN soldiers were present but took no action to disperse the Young Patriots. The Protocol officer for UN SRSG Pierre Schori told us that ONUCI and the Ministry of Security had agreed ahead of time that UN peacekeepers would be present only as observers and FANCI would assure the security. He also told us that since Young Patriots leader Charles Ble Goude had announced the previous evening on television that there would be no Young Patriot activity, many were surprised by the demonstration.

[1](#)2. (C) After over two hours of protests by the Young Patriots (the Patriots yelled at the security forces but did not engage in violent behavior), the mayor of Port Bouet asked the Port Bouet Chief of Police to intervene so that the interviews could get underway. By 11:30, most of the Young Patriots had been dispersed. On the stage at City Hall, one sixteen year old girl was interviewed by five judges to determine if she had indeed been born in Port Bouet and if she met the requirements of Ivoirian nationality. The audience consisted of UN observers including Schori, the mayor of Port Bouet, the Congolese Minister of Foreign Affairs, journalists, and FANCI and UN soldiers. The judges asked questions about her origins unrelated to whether or not she was born in Port Bouet, apparently to see if she were lying. Her witnesses included an aunt and a sister. After about ten minutes of interviewing, the judges agreed to issue her a birth certificate. In all, her case took about twenty minutes. The judges said they will render the decision regarding her nationality later. (NOTE: This procedure differs from what the Minister of Justice announced at his May 16 press conference, refel A. According to the Minister, the judges were to make a decision on nationality immediately, and, if it was favorable, there would be a 48-hour period in which to protest the decision. END NOTE)

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: If the judges continue to work at this glacial pace, each tribunal would be able to rule on a mere 168 people in a week. Therefore, unless the government of Cote d'Ivoire is planning to deploy a massive number of judges, it would take years to determine the status of Cote d'Ivoire's 3.5 million undocumented residents. END COMMENT  
Hooks